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ABSTRACT

The role of adult education in reducing inequalities and raising levels of professional qualifications and cultural standards is the subject of this series of five reports presented at a symposium on adult education and inequality. Discussions of the role of adult education's threefold perspective of literacy learning and general cultural education, vocational skills upgrading or reorientation, and consciousness raising in industrial versus third world countries are presented in the first two reports. Myths about the nature and origins of inequality and the role of adult education in third world countries are covered in the third report. The international dimensions of inequality and adult education are described in the fourth report, which outlines the social and political role of adult education in developing societies and the preferred role of adult education in developed and developing countries. In the fifth report, on the role of adult education in reducing inequality (with particular reference to the rural context in Latin America), the topics of poverty, inequality, approaches to reducing rural poverty, literacy training, job training, continuing education, and education as liberation are discussed. (MN)

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ADULT EDUCATION FACES INEQUALITY

ASPBAE COURIER

No 19
JULY 1980

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PREFACE

An international symposium was convened by Unesco and organized by the University of Madras from 28 January to 1 February, 1980, to discuss the role of adult education in reducing inequalities and raising levels of professional qualifications and cultural standards. The Chairman was Dr Malcolm Adiseshiah, Past President of the International Council for Adult Education, who is also editing the conference proceedings. It was attended by social scientists and adult educators from all regions of the world, among them the Secretary-General of ASPBAE, who obtained Dr Adiseshiah's permission to publish some conference papers in the *ASPBAE COURIER*.

The full proceedings are being edited by Dr Adiseshiah for publication by the University of Madras in English, and by Unesco in French, and will contain the following:

ADULT EDUCATION FACES INEQUALITIES

ed. Malcolm S. Adiseshiah

Preface:	A two-page statement highlighting the main outcomes by:
	Malcolm Adiseshiah
Chapter I	Basic Issues - Papers by:
	Malcolm Adiseshiah : Paul Bertelsen
Chapter II	Discussion - Adult Education and Inequalities - The International Dimension
	Papers by:
	A.K. Jallaluddin : Ian Morrison
Chapter III	Discussion - Adult Education and Inequalities - The Regional Dimension
	Papers by:
	Aldo E. Solari : Hugo Fernandes
Chapter IV	Discussion - Adult Education and Inequalities - The National Level
	Papers by:
	Susheela Bhan : Midhat Ismail : M'Bakile A Kweka
	Rafe-uz-Zaman : Marlise Salles

Chapter V — Discussion - Adult Education and Improving Professional Qualifications

Papers by:

R. Jayagopal : *G.R. Damodaran*

Chapter VI — Discussion - Adult Education and Raising Cultural Standards

Paper by:

V.N. Deshpande

Chapter VII — Discussion - Adult Education, Inequalities and Research

Paper by:

Budd Hall

Chapter VIII — Discussion - Adult Education, Inequalities, Professional Qualifications, and Cultural Development - An Overview

Paper by:

J. Hallak

Chapter IX — Discussion - Adult Education Faces Inequalities - A Conspectus

Annex I — Prospectus of the Symposium and List of Participants and Observers

Annex II — Presidential Address

Inaugural Address

We include in this Volume of the *ASPBAE COURIER* a brief report of the Conference by Dr Adiseshiah, Dr Adiseshiah's Presidential Address and opening paper on Adult Education and Inequality, Dr Jalaluddin's 'discussion note' on The International Dimensions of Inequality and Adult Education, and a paper by a distinguished Latin American Colleague, Hugo Fernandez, a Uraguayan working at Inter American Institute of Agricultural Science, (IICA) in San Jose, Costa Rica, which has particular reference to the rural context in Latin America.

ADULT EDUCATION FACES INEQUALITIES
BRIEF REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM*

UNIVERSITY OF MADRAS

JANUARY 28 - FEBRUARY 1, 1980

Unesco which has over three and a half decades of its functioning assisted in juxtaposing Adult Education with various facets of adult life and society - illiteracy, continuing education, leisure time use, cultural development, vocational training, employment and unemployment, science and technology, citizenship and education for international understanding, mass media, non formal education - helped organise in the University of Madras for the first time an International Symposium on Adult Education and Inequalities, which is the hard reality of our world at both the national and international levels. The Symposium attended by 30 social scientists and educators from all 5 continents arrived at conclusions which point to our tasks ahead in this area.

As we look back on two Development Decades of the United Nations, of the sixties and seventies, and as we prepare ourselves to enter the Third Development Decade of the eighties, we realise that the kind of Development which has taken place has increased our inequalities - between industrialised and developing countries and between the rich minority and the poor majority within countries. Adult Education must now address itself to this disturbing situation, which left to its own momentum will further worsen in the eighties, and not ignore it or become a part of it, as it has tended to in the first two Decades.

The inequalities characterise all parts of our society, particularly the dependence relations between developing and industrialised countries and the reinforcing linkages of the kind of international division of labour which exists in our world and against which the New International Economic Order holds up the prospects of a system based on equality, self reliance and interdependence. Unfortunately the New International Economic Order is still a normative concept which is under sharp debate. Adult Education has here a clear mandate - to sensitise people in the industrialised countries to an awareness of the international inequalities and to change behaviour and foster learning that qualifies for effective participation in society and results in citizen support and understanding of policies that aim at equity, equality and national self determination - in intergovernmental relations, in actions of transnational corporations and in the effects of the transfers of technology and trade and capital flows into the developing countries.

Inequalities that exist and that are growing within the countries are indicated by unequal distribution of food and income - which is the poverty phenomenon - 60 per cent of the Third World's 3000 million being

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* Brief report by the President of the Symposium, Dr Malcolm Adiseshiah

poor, of whom 800 million are destitutes. This is due to the pattern of ownership of the country's assets by a small minority which is able to use the political framework, the economic infrastructure, the educational system and cultural networks to serve its interests as against those of the majority of society. Sociocultural factors like caste in India, tribalism in Africa and race in some of the industrialised countries and inequalities based on sex and age act either as a further cause of inequalities or as a reinforcing element in the prevailing and pervading socio economic inequalities.

There are broadly two approaches among the countries to the question of reducing inequalities and adult education's task will differ according to the approaches. There are some countries such as Cuba and Nicaragua in Latin America, Tanzania and Mozambique in Africa, China and Vietnam and North Korea in Asia where the government and people are committed to reducing and eliminating inequalities, expressed in the ownership of the means of production by workers and peasants. There are other countries which are more concerned with relieving the lack of food, clothing, housing, drinking water, education and health services of the poor majority through provision of these minimum needs and generation of increased employment opportunities, with no reference or mere rhetorical reference to equalising assets ownership.

Of Adult Education's three fold perspectives of literacy learning (in the case of illiterate adults) and general cultural education (in the case of the educated adults), vocational skills upgradation or reorientation, and consciousness raising, consciousness raising must be the outcome of all other perspectives and forms of adult education in regard to Adult Education's role in reducing inequalities. Its responsibility for raising the consciousness of the people of the industrialised world to the unequal international relations which reinforce the differences between the North and South in living standards, trade and capital inflows and profit outflows, the education gap and cultural dominance has been earlier noted. In the developing countries, Adult Education has to support through its learning processes the inequalities reduction programme in countries which are committed to such reduction and create the consciousness in other countries both among the ruling elites and the poor majority of the exploitative nature of current social relations and help organise them to reduce existing inequalities. Here there is a dilemma. In most third world countries, Adult Education is a state sponsored, financed and in some cases government run programme. How can such a programme work for the changeover from (and destruction of) the power elites and networks which originate the adult education activities. It is here that the case for voluntary agencies and some political parties who are outside the state apparatus running the adult education programme becomes clear, though it also means that such a voluntary effort cannot be a mass national adult education campaign which is the need of our unequal societies.

Against this juxtaposition of Adult Education and Inequalities there are certain tasks incumbent on the Adult Education programme in all countries.

First, Adult Education should in the Third Development Decade address itself to studying the nature and extent of inequalities within and between countries and consciously tailor its multifaceted programmes in each country as to raise the consciousness of people about the existant and growing inequalities and the contribution of people to their reduction.

Second, there is need for education and struggle within each country, and at the international level in Unesco, to increase the funds available for Adult Education and that part of it aimed at reducing inequalities and the condition of economic and cultural deprivation of the majority. In most countries the adult education budget is a microscopic percentage (usually 0.2) of the national income and an equally small part (usually 2 to 3 per cent) of the total education budget. Till this situation is corrected and adult education is adequately funded, it cannot contribute to reducing inequalities between and within countries.

Third, the kind of adult educators, the cadres, who are recruited in the coming Decade for this programme aimed at reducing inequalities, at least at the level of full time trainers and workers, should be those with some commitment to reducing inequalities of economic, socio-cultural and individual origin. This kind of commitment they may already have before coming into the programme or alternatively conditions should be created for their developing such a commitment. This cadres approach applies in an appropriate manner also to the vocational skills promotion and cultural development area, because adult education has to design, new vocational skills upgradation programmes for the 90 per cent who are outside the organised labour market and outside the skills formation programmes as well as counter their cultural deprivation. This requires a certain kind of commitment and committed people, including from among those who are the deprived, who can be found if some of the cadres are recruited at their work places, villages or urban slums.

Fourth, the teaching learning process under this kind of programme goes beyond the usual pedagogic traditions, of oral instruction, of teacher-pupil relationship. It will be part of living in the community, living with the poor, the deprived, and the oppressed, of learning by dealing with actual situations of deprivation rather than the acquiring of second hand information or the traditional literacy tools, which are necessary, but only as a means to raising one's consciousness to deal with life situations.

Fifth, Adult Education programmes aimed at reducing inequalities upsets the traditional sequencing of Adult Education which was referred to earlier - literacy and general cultural learning, vocational skills upgrading and consciousness raising. In fact as far as the equality promoting programmes are concerned, it is consciousness raising and employment skills and increased income earning which are the prior means with literacy or general education bringing up the rear. If this sequencing is reasonable, if the development of concepts and the capacity of expressions of what is learned may precede the acquisition of communicational and computational skills, then this affects the teaching-learning sequence and the content of teaching-learning material.

Sixth, this teaching-learning approach is also a good safeguard against the subject matter of what is being learnt being imposed from outside. One of the really agonising questions faced by adult education is the danger not only of indoctrination and manipulation (under the guise of motivation) which can however, be identified and avoided, but of not being sensitive to what the learners want and prefer. This, what the adult learners need, think they need, should always be the starting point of the subject matter of the text books, the reading materials and the discussion groups for the adult learners. It is so easy to ignore the expressed wishes of the deprived and illiterate villager and substitute the adult educator's ideas even in such equality promoting format as role plays.

Seventh, the powerful mass media tools, radio in all countries and increasingly television in some, with their massive coverage which satellites make possible in certain regions, can contribute to reducing inequalities or at least introducing changes in the levels of large masses of people which they can reach. The increased farmers productivity which Farm Forums in Canada and India have brought about, the Health and Nutrition Education which the multi media campaign in Tanzania, Ghana and Ivory coast have resulted in, the relative smooth changeover to the metric system in the UK and other countries are pointers of what these impressive means can do in promoting equalities between and within countries.

Eighth, this subject of Adult Education in face of inequalities throws up a whole lot of issues on which further analysis, reflection and investigation - research - are needed. These include: the causes and content of equality and equity: the meaning of political commitment: the relation of equality to other development objectives: the sensitisation of people: the problem of motivation: retention of literacy, teaching-learning methods, occupational training and cultural participation as equalising forces.

Finally, there are a series of immediate and practical tasks:
addressed to the University of Madras for
organising in light of these conclusions,
and with the help of ASPBAE (Region 1), a
workshop for the training of Non formal and
Adult Education cadres, and for publishing
in English and French a monograph as the
outcome of this Symposium at which Adult
Education faced Inequalities:
and the Unesco to help a developing country
establish an international centre for the
training of adult education cadres and assist
existing centres develop such programmes, and
on which CREFAL in Mexico and the government
of Tamil Nadu in India have made offers:
and for the future programmes and budgets of
Unesco to provide for the continuation of the
reflection, dialogue and exchanges in this area

of Adult Education reducing inequalities in our world, on which this Symposium has been able to take no more than the first halting steps.

INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM
ON
THE ROLE OF ADULT EDUCATION
IN REDUCING INEQUALITIES AND RAISING
LEVELS OF PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS
AND CULTURAL STANDARDS

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JANUARY 28 TO FEBRUARY 1, 1980

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ADULT EDUCATION, INEQUALITIES, PROFESSIONAL AND CULTURAL PROMOTION

by Malcolm S. Adiseshiah

Mandate

This International Symposium is being held in execution of the 1978 Unesco General Conference decision which runs as follows: "An International Symposium will be organised under contract, in co-operation with an appropriate institution in a developing country, on the contribution of adult education to reducing inequalities between various population groups, to raising the level of professional qualifications and improving the cultural standards of adults". The Director General of Unesco invited the University of Madras as the "institution in a developing country" to organise the Symposium and, on his behalf, and with the support of the Indian National Commission for co-operation with Unesco, the Vice Chancellor has organised this Symposium.

Under our mandate, we are at this Symposium confronted with an instrument, Adult Education, and three objectives which it should subserve.

a) reducing inequalities

b) raising the levels of professional qualifications, and

c) improving cultural standards.

I would like to comment briefly on these four concepts.

Adult Education

Adult Education which is the organised learning of adults in the age group 15+ falls broadly into two areas: the education of adults who have had education and the education of adults who have had no education. According to Unesco's Statistical Year Book for 1977, out of the total world adult population of 2818 millions, 2000 millions have had some education and 818 millions have had no education, (of whom India's share at 240 million is a little less than one third). For the former educated group of 2000 million, adult education is a continuing of the education that they have had. For the second group of 818 million uneducated adults, whom we call illiterates, adult education is first initiation to the learning process. Hence to start with, I call your attention to the in-built inequality in the Adult Education system which is a generic concept covering both the further education of the educated and the first education of the uneducated. Inequality is a contrast status of some who have as against others who have not.

With this background, it is not surprising that it is only recently that Adult Education recognised the fact of educational inequality and turned its attention to it. Till recently, Unesco had two programmes, one called Adult Education and the other called Fundamental, later community and more recently literacy education. It is only now that the two programmes have been merged into a single Adult Education programme. And even so, the Adult Education programme has used for the entire programme including its illiteracy sector the known methods and the problem contents of continuing education. The left-overs of that approach are seen in the second and third objectives of this Symposium how adult education can raise professional*qualifications and how adult education can promote cultural development.

Raising Professional *Qualifications

Adult Education's traditional role in the industrialised countries has been to train and retrain workers from the unskilled to the top managerial and professional levels, to update skills and counter obsolescence and to combine in various ways such education and training with work. This role of adult education is important for a small group in the Third World countries, whose working population is 2 billion, of whom 10 per cent, that is, 200 million are in the organised sector. Or take India. Out of our working population of 250 million about 25 million work in factories and out of 5.5 million who enter the work force every year about 550,000 enter the organised sector. Adult Education's traditional professional training programmes refer to the in-service, refresher and orientation training of this 10 per cent of the work force. If this is all that Adult Education's role in raising professional *qualifications means, then Adult Education will be worsening our inequalities, will be leaving out of its ambit 90 per cent of our working population. Hence we have to devise new forms of professional *training which will (a) provide such vocational training to those who are outside the market wage structure including the self-employed, who together constitute the majority of the work force of the Third World countries and (b) provide training in the new skills and new technologies that the displaced workers who form the majority of the unemployed in the industrialised countries - displaced because of specific technologies like the container revolution which has thrown millions of port and dock workers out of employment, displaced because of the incompatability of high growth rate with full employment which is a broader aspect of the rapid overall technological change that is taking place, or displaced as and when the New International Economic Order (NIEO) target of labour-intensive industries is shifted from the industrialised North to the industrialised South and replaced in the North by capital-intensive technologically sophisticated industries.

Cultural Development

A second traditional role of adult education has been to improve the cultural standards of the people. With the educational background of the adults in the industrialised countries, reading circles, music clubs, dramatic appreciation bodies, discussion groups as well as the revival of

* i.e.: occupational

what is called folk culture and their arts and crafts have been effective means of upgrading people's cultural life and understanding. And for this a massive infrastructure exists in those countries. Unesco estimates that 90 per cent of the books produced in our world are produced in those countries. Their information systems which both purvey technological data and promote rapid technology transfers between themselves are highly developed, as is their mass media including satellite communication which makes for wide and rapid discrimination of cultural values and cultural events. This adult education role of improvement of cultural standards is a different order in the Third World countries because of the dominant need to affirm the equality of all our diverse and pluralistic cultures at the intranational and international levels as against the hierarchy of cultures on which our colonial societies have been built for centuries and which today persists in what our anthropologists call the culture of poverty. Here cultural improvement has to begin with cultural participation of the people and for this the information networks and their cultural content, the cultural infrastructure which are elitist in both their ownership and control, have to be restructured and developed on the basis of the humanist tradition of our cultures and the new emerging values of science and technology in the service of man. Such a development of people's culture is bound up with, is an inextricable part of and is indistinguishable from, the struggle for human conditions of living, which our internal and international inequalities deny. This manifestation of the common people which is what culture is, is portrayed, for us, in the works of artists and writers whose memorable men and women are the postman, the tiller, the farm labourer, the stone cutter, the humble men and women in Gulpa Guccha, those whose garments are covered with dust, whose clothes are tattered and stained, recalling us to our adult education task set forth in a greater writer's eleventh thesis on Feuerbach: "philosophers have been content with thinking the world, now it is time to transform it". Adult Education's role of cultural promotion in our countries is thus not of a lower order of priority, it is part of the insistent pathway that we have all of us to have as part of our move to a society of equity and equality.

Reducing Inequalities

I believe that it is for the first time that Unesco has decided to confront Adult Education against the basic reality which characterises the Third World which is its poverty which in turn is a consequence of inequalities. I began by referring to the Unesco estimate that there are over 800 million illiterate adults in our world today. Unesco, as India and other Third World countries have also, has, on the basis of various trials, realised that illiteracy cannot be removed by literacy programmes. The history of Adult Education programmes in our countries is littered with the collapse and failures of straight literacy programmes. Because behind these 800 million illiterate adults is the stark fact which the World Bank has documented for us that these same 800 million men and women constitute the destitutes - those suffering from the worst forms of poverty in our Third World. Again, where adult education, with the help of the other, what we call in India, minimum needs programme, or what in United Nations language is called the basic needs thrust, has attempted to remove poverty, that effort has failed. The failure has been for technical reasons because employment generation keeps them still poor (out of 2 billion working

people in our countries, 1.5 billion are the working poor), increase in wages at the cost of profit touches, as we have seen, a minority of the work force, most of whom are outside the organised labour market and are self employed, while the other components such as housing, drinking water and health facilities are at a level which keeps them at the minimum subsistence level and continues the yawning gap between the rich and poor. Anti-poverty programmes which are based on proposals for direct income transfers from the rich minority to the poor majority have remained paper plans because of structural resistance. And so we arrive at the basic cause for illiteracy which is a part of the destitution of the 800 million people in our world, and that is the inequalities in incomes and rewards, and back of it the inequalities in assets ownership. These inequalities are intranational and are reinforced by international inequalities. Thus we face the basic issues before this Symposium: can Adult Education contribute to the reducing of these intranational and international inequalities - the concept linking professional upgrading, cultural, promotion and poverty amelioration? I believe it can, by raising the consciousness of people - all people, the rich minority and the poor majority within the countries as well as the people in the few rich and the mass of the poor countries. That is the primary task of Adult Education in our countries, and as this task is faithfully and successfully executed, the literacy of illiterate adults will also be provided , the professional competence of the work force will also be raised to ensure a level of sufficiency, and the cultural flowering of all our people will certainly be ensured.

ADULT EDUCATION AND INEQUALITY

A Note for the Unesco International Symposium on The Role of Adult Education, Inequalities and Professional and Cultural Promotion - by Dr. Malcolm S. Adiseshiah.

Some Debunking

I would like to start this note on Adult Education and Inequality with setting aside some views held by some of the well-to-do in society.

One view is that poverty, which is the main product of inequality, is a virtue. This view is usually held by some of those who are well off in our societies, leading a few of them to voluntarily embrace poverty. The virtuous nature of poverty is set forth by all religions, with hopes held out of compensation in the next life either in this world or in some other existence. Poverty is a way of life chosen by the Hindu Sadhu, the Buddhist Bhikku, the Muslim Mullah and the Christian Monk. It is also a way of life associated with Gandhi, who took a vow and kept it that he would not live in a house, or eat food or wear clothes other than what was available to the poorest in the land. (As an aside, it may be recalled that when he decided to visit a town in South India and asked one of his close collaborators to build a hut for him to live there, his friend telegraphed to him that they had no money to build the hut, that they "could not afford his poverty" and would he please live in the friends house). There are four comments to be made about this view that poverty is a virtue. First, the poor themselves do not consider their poverty as a virtue but as an evil that they are subjected to. It is the non-poor who point to the meritorious nature of poverty. Second, the evil which poverty represents stems from the fact that some are well off, while others are poor, though both groups share a common humanity. If poverty is a virtue then all should be poor. Third, the embracing of poverty by some of the non-poor, while pointing to the holding up the ideal of "simple living and high thinking", is a voluntary act on their part, which has no relevance to the imposition of the poverty life and status on the poor. Fourth, in the Third World the majority of people are poor and it is immoral to describe them as the virtuous poor. In the industrially advanced countries about a quarter of their people are poor, and it is recognised that this evil should be removed rapidly in these societies. Poverty which is a function of inequality is ethically wrong.

A second view is that inequality in society is the natural order of things. It is ordained by providence that some in society are born to rule and others to be ruled, that some are born with high intelligence and others with low intelligence, that some are born as brahmins and others as pariahs (untouchables). The parallel here is the distinction between cows and crows, between apples and sour grapes, between roses and weeds. Hence each should carry out the duties inherent in the group into which he is born. There are born distinctive functions accruing to the scholar, the land owner and the industrial leader as there are to the butcher and baker, and each must discharge his ordained function. The main comment on this view is that there is nothing preordained, nothing natural to the unequal groups into which people are divided. The socially and

economically strong arrogate to themselves a superior place in the social hierarchy and living, reinforcing their privileged position by the labour and dues paid to them by those whom they have placed in the lower social scale. And in doing so, in building into society the basis of inequality, the dominent groups have used a whole armoury which is at their disposal, of caste, tribe, race, region, religion and town and village, which are a reflection of the class structure of society. Society which creates the unequal social structure can make the basic structural changes to counter the inequality. There is nothing predestined about inequality. Inequality is an induced state of social injustice.

A third related view is that inequality is fed by the poor themselves because they are lazy, because they are unproductive, because they are deviant in the set of behaviour patterns and values. This probably strikes home to all of us in this symposium as being the characterisation and rationalisation that we have used and use in relation to the unequal social relations at our door-step in explaining the position of our gardener, our maid or man servant, our cook and our chauffeur. And in furtherance of this widely held view has been the creation of various social stereotypes - the laziness of this group of people, the lack of intelligence of that group, the capacity for and attraction to manual labour by the other, and so on. Here there are a number of comments that should be made of this justification of inequality. First from the economic point of view, the poor are in line very closely to what the economists call marginal costs and marginal returns, so that in order to obtain the maximum benefit out of their extremely meagure resources they are much closer to their economic optimum than the smaller well-to-do group whose sub-optimal (inefficient, unintelligent and lazy life styles) positions are revealed in the various forms of wastages and leakages that they indulge in. This is not an argument for poverty (on which a case may be made for all to be poor) but an indication of non-optimality in an unequal society. There is in this view also reference to the behaviour patterns and values of the poor, what the anthropologist calls the cluster of poverty traits, which some non-anthropologists use as an explication of inequality. This the anthropologist himself never does, for he witnesses revolutions - whether it be the French a la Comte; the Soviet or Cuban a la Oscar Lewis or Chinese a la Leacok - which can and do abolish these poverty traits, which are attributed as the causal factor for inequality, though poverty elimination in these societies takes a longer time. This issue is dealt with later in this note.

Inequality is ethically evil, socially unjust and economically non-optimal.

Inequality

What is inequality?

Inequality is the uneven distribution between groups of the population of

Income and food consumption

Property

Access to basic services

Education and training

Social mobility

Political power

Status

This is rather a wide and mixed bag, and even so is certainly not exhaustive, which is a reminder that any definition of inequality must be seen not as a boundary-setting fence but as a sign-post pointing to a direction to be taken.

The usual indicator of inequality is the unequal distribution of income in a country, stemming from the double social phenomena that, despite every one making his or her contribution to social well-being there are differing rewards to different positions, which in turn are set up to see that the recruitment process does not draw in the talented poor. Income inequality characterises all countries. In the United States, the lowest one fifth of its population receives 2.5 per cent of the national income, while the top one fifth receives 49 per cent. (1) In the third world countries, 75 per cent of GNP goes to the top 40 per cent of society, while 12 per cent accrues to the bottom 40 per cent. (2) Income inequality is not expressed only in variations in the distribution of national income or GNP between each quintile or decile of the population. Equally important is the level and growth rate of income of the lower social group. This has particular relevance to the fact that the normal economic assumption that there can be unrestricted transfers among income groups does not hold in the Third World countries, and so policies aimed at removing or reducing income inequalities must take into account the trade-off, if any, between growth and greater equality. Reliance on income alone as a measure of inequality tends to understate its extent. Hence a small refinement, following Engal's law wherein the lower the individual's or family's income, the higher the percentage spent on food, is to express inequality in terms of the percentage of the individual or family income spent on food. A more common measure is to compute the cost of minimum food, (usually 2200 calories per day per adult) clothing and housing that a family needs and establish a poverty line at that point and identify those who are below and those above it. On this basis 2/3 of the world lives below the poverty line and 1/3 above it (3) or again it is estimated that in 1962-63 the poorest 10 per cent of the world population accounted for 2 per cent of world consumption, while the top 10 per cent consumed 35 per cent. The bottom 30 per cent of the world's people consume only about 10 per cent of total world consumption. (4) Economists use certain useful tools - through reading of the Lorenzo curve and estimating Gini coefficients to measure inequality. Such estimates of the poverty lines on food consumption and their measuring tools to be meaningful must be based on the specific cultural, social and economic characteristics of the people in each particular locality - village, district, state and country, and these are being gradually worked out, as inequalities are seen not as something new, but new in their growing magnitude and new in

in regard to our growing awareness of their cause and effect. One more thought which relates to the international dimensions of income inequalities: as the table below (5) shows, international size distribution of income and real consumption per capita is more unequal between countries that within countries, whether they be rich, middle income or poor.

Country group	1970 Constant Prices		Population
	Per Capita $	Total Billion $	1970 millions
Rich	2,790	2,570	920
Middle income	870	279	310
Poor	300	155	520
Very Poor	120	230	1,930

Inequality is also measured by the unequal distribution of assets ownership. The 1960 world census for agriculture shows that there are more than 100 million small farm-holders in Third World countries operating less than 5 hectares, and that half of them own and operate less than half an hectare. On the other hand 80 per cent of all farm land is owned by 5 per cent of farm population. The agricultural census in 1960 and survey in 1970 in Indonesia reports that 41 per cent of rural households had no land or less than 0.1 hectare, and by 1973 almost half of Java's rural households, that is 1[illegible] million people, were landless. Land concentration and labour market stratification have been greatly accelerated by the so called Green Revolution. (6) In fact the ownership of a wide variety of assets - privately owned capital, access to public goods, savings and human capital in addition to land is unequally distributed. There is more inequality in the distribution of these assets than in the distribution of incomes, as seen in the fact that the bottom 40 per cent in society lack human capital, do not own any physical capital and their access to public goods and services like water, co-operative credit, fertilisers etc. is blocked by the well-to-do who appropriate these assets for themselves. Against this background, variations in income are a function of variations of asset ownership and dealing with unequal ownership - particularly human capital which is what adult education is all about - is in a sense of more importance from the long range point of view than either income transfers or concentrating on increasing the share of wages as against profits. This is not only because of the fragmented nature of the labour market, but also because the self employed and those who do not enter the wage labour market constitute the majority of work force families in Third World Countries.

There are other non-economic components and indicators of inequality, the most notable of which are the cultural traits that accompany the poor groups as compared to those of the non-poor in society. This cluster of poverty traits is described as "a behaviour pattern, manifesting alienation from the rest of the community and a short time horizon". (7) Into this characterisation of inequality should also be brought the various factors of caste, race, ethnic origin etc. which is a useful and salutory reminder that the income or property definition of inequality assumes that changes

in them will change the psychological, social, cultural and political facets of inequality. Here we are back again in the debate as to whether it is social structures which determine values, or whether it is value which determine social structures. Is the sub-culture of poverty an independent variable of inequality systems, or is it an adaptation to the limited and discriminating opportunities available to the lower compared to upper deciles of society ? I am not prepared to dismiss a landless labourer's feeling of solidarity with his fellow caste or tribe or kin workers as "false consciousness", though I also see that there has to be a change in the awareness of his condition (which is the major task of adult education), if he is to break out of that sub-culture and gain political power. In general I must confess to some unease with these non-economic indicators of inequality not because they are not quantitatively measurable, but because they smack of cultural determinism; that is that culture as a set of common values and beliefs, instead of providing a rationale, is taken as a determinant of the behaviour of these groups seen in studies on the dynamics of small societies which are not articulated to those of our larger societies or in the equation of urbanisation with social deviancy.

Adult Education

What is the role of Adult Education in this struggle against inequality ?

To begin with, the contribution of educational policies and of the educational system to inequality in society must be noted, which in a sense adds to the burden which Adult Education has to carry in promoting equality in our societies. I have in other writings (8) detailed the manner in which the educational system is contributing to the political, social and economic inequalities. Earlier reference was made to the two basic phenomena of inequality, the differing rewards to different positions and the blocking of access to the better paid positions for the talented from the poverty sector, which is the majority sector of society. The cord linking the two phenomena is the education system, which promotes inequality spatially as between urban and rural areas, sexually as between boys and girls, generationally as between the younger and adult generation, socially as between the rich minority and the poor majority fiscally in acting as a transfer conduit of subsidies from the poor to the rich. Increased education and increased educational expenditure in the name of equality of opportunity and the even more dubious objective of equality of educational outcomes have been another hidden way of the poor subsidising the education of the rich in the Third World countries, as well as in the industrially advanced countries. One of the US studies for instance points out that schools are an almost perfectly regressive form of taxation, noting that the cost of scheduling the poorest one tenth of the population is $2,500 per pupil over his life time, while the children of the richest one tenth cost about $35,000 per pupil. (9) In India given the fact that the 80 per cent of school and college completers are from the top 20 per cent of society, the highest social group benefits four times as much as the poverty group, who, however, pay 80 per cent of the education costs (through indirect taxation). (10) Another study shows that private schools and colleges which are the preserve of the children of rich families are to the extent of 70 per cent financed through public subsidies

and tax avoidance. (11) Even more serious, the main outcome of the school and the University is to mould and condition the student to fit into the unequal and unjust society. Thus the major function of the education system in the Third World is that of legitimising its unequal social system. The question may then be posed whether the time is not near when similar to the dethronement of GNP by basic needs fulfillment and poverty amelioration as a measure of Development, the development and achievements of Non-formal and Adult Education rather than the further linear growth and spread of formal education should be a measure of learning?

Adult Education in the Third World countries starts with a relatively clean slate in the sense that with few exceptions - Cuba and Tanzania for example - somewhere between 95 to 99 per cent of educational finances have been and are being spent on school and university education with little or nothing on Adult Education.(12) Adult Education's interrelated three components of literacy learning, professional skills formation, and social awareness awakening are addressed to the three freedoms that the poor majority in our countries are looking to - freedom from ignorance, freedom from low wage employment and freedom from inequality and injustice. The three are varying facets of a single factor - consciousness-raising-whether it be through literacy skills or gainful higher income earning crafts or through organisation to fight against their unequal status and for their rights.

These three components are a single learning experience in what I have described as consciousness raising, because it is both possible and easy for adult education programmes to slide into becoming merely a literacy effort or an employment training package, which are each good and beneficial in themselves but have little to do with anti-inequality and distributional objectives. The possibility of Adult Education programmes becoming straight literacy programmes is being demonstrated in some parts of India's National Adult Education Programme. The rural power structures and the urban elites being aware of the dangers to them and their dominant position that would follow if the programme made the people aware of their unequal, weak and discriminated status aim at either obstructing and terminating the programme in their rural or urban locale, or divert it into harmless literacy and some quite irrelevant craft training (such as basket-making for men and/or sewing classes for women) effort. It is in this context also that the usual so-called weaker sections programmes are distorted to serve the interest of the well-to-do minority. One such is the programme of decentralisation and regional and area planning which, as the experience in Brazil, India and China demonstrates, help the rich who are able to collar and control the decentralised resources meant for the poor farmers or landless labourers. (13) There are also the leakages referred to earlier - Keynesian as in the case of the gains to the rich in the region from both appropriating the regional transfers and benefiting the privileged groups in other rich regions through imports from there, and other leakages as where the road buildings and other rural infrastructure accompanying land reform benefit in the main and largely the large land-owners. Also even the administrative structures are loaded against the small and marginal farmers as in the case of the Block Development Officer who is given a target of say 1000 hectares

to be brought under the High Yielding variety of seeds and who naturally finds it easier to provide the seeds to 10 farmers owning 100 hectares each rather than to 1000 farmers owning and operating 1 hectare each. Or in the case of land reform programmes which are usually accompanied by land seizure and occupation by the landless, where the Rural Administrator in charge of 'law and order' proceeds to enforce order, forgetting the law in question. And adult education workers in the area faced with these situations and choices unwillingly accept and go along with the possible option available to them and make the programme an irrelevant literacy learning effort. It is irrelevant to the major issue of inequality and exploitation that the people face. Such a transformation is also the easy way out for Adult Education because it is the classical well known pedogogic or androgogic path and does not call for study, analysis and innovation that social awareness learning involves. On the other hand, when the programme is distorted into a straight skill forming and employment programme which is a palliative suggested to retrieve Adult Education from the literacy morass, it should be noted that skills formation by itself or employment per se does not promote distributional objectives. In the Third World countries, the majority of the poverty sector comprise the working poor. Full time unemployment in our countries is of marginal significance. Population census show that of the 2 billion poor, over 1.5 billion are the working poor, employed in some low wage occupation on a part-time or full-time basis. (14) And so making the Adult Education a straight skills formation programme does not provide the sufficient condition in the move towards an egalitarian society. Both these distortions - literacy learning per se and skills formation per se - are related to the so-called problem of motivation which will be dealt with later.

Adult Education is the necessary condition for the successful attainment and execution of the redistributive development programmes which are aimed at moving towards a more equal and just society that Third World countries have eloquently set forth as their objectives and on which so much rhetoric is expended. These programmes, if they are to see the light of day and are to succeed, require that the majority of their peoples - who are the discriminated against poor - should develop both the consciousness that I have referred to earlier and the organisation to (a) understand the true implications of the programmes, (b) Provide the back up and support from below, and (c) maintain the momentum of these programmes through the many years ahead of them. There will be attempts at diversions and some of them will be successful; as noted earlier there will be distortions when in the action taken in the name of the weaker sections, whether it be the nationalisation of banks or coca cola or land reform or electrification of rural pumpsets, the principle of zero sum game will come into play and will be perceived by the rich, but Adult Education by making people conscious of their status and the prospects opened up, and by organising them to bring to bear their rather precious local knowledge on each of the interventions, to act as a pressure group with the implementing political and administrative bodies and agencies, and to learn by doing and so help in helping themselves to meet all their various problems of injustice and discrimination provides the necessary base for all redistributive programmes.

But this also means that such a rounded Adult Education Programme demands as sufficient conditions allied political, economic and social reconstruction and reforms. Nothing said earlier about the distortions that can creep into programmes for the weaker sections such as land reform, food for work, irrigation, high yielding variety, employment generation, nationalisation etc. takes away from their being a sufficient condition for Adult Education to make its contribution to the attainment of an egalitarian and just society. What was pointed out earlier was that they are subject to distortions and diversions which Adult Educators - teachers and learners - should be aware of. Even nationalisation in a Third World non-socialist society will benefit the bureacrats and the not-so-poor (organised workers) and not the poor. But a complete and comprehensive adult education programme must be accompanied by and be set against a backdrop of a redirection of public investments in land reforms, credit and other inputs needed by the poor majority, public facilities, population control and human capital formation (which is in part Adult Education), nationalisation, employment generation and income transfers from the rich to the poor through appropriate fiscal instruments. Without such a redirected programme of public investment, adult education will be functional in a vacuum.

In this programme of consciousness-raising, mobilisation and organising the poor and weaker sections, certain distinctive preconditions and stages are indicated by the programme's experience to date. These include the people concerned recognising themselves as the poor and discriminated, rather than as members of a caste or a tribe or a region. On this basis it is part of the Adult Educator's mandate that he helps in the laws on the statute book benefiting the learner, whether it be in the matter of land ceiling surpluses, or house sites, or drinking water or co-operative credit, or fertiliser and high yield variety (HYV) seed, or food for work or bank loans to the urban poor. It will then be possible for the adult educator to help in the forming of rural and urban trade unions of this unorganised mass, and for the Association in the country and its state or district branches to help in promoting a working alliance between the small and marginal farmers, tenants, crop sharers, the landless, jobless and urban marginals. Only then will their participation in political decision-making be ensured. Then the scenario is set for adult education to be able to discharge its role in the fight for equality.

One of the problems raised in regard to all Adult Education programmes, particularly those addressed to the hard-working rural poor, is the problem of motivation: that is, how to motivate the rural adult to participate in the adult education programme. On this several comments can be made. First, if the programme is a pure literacy exercise or a craft skill effort, the intelligent poor rural adult will not be interested because it does not speak to his condition. If it is the programme as set forth in this note, it is his or her programme. There is no need to motivate the participant. Second, the problem of motivation is the other way around. It relates to us, to the well-to-do minority who organise and run these programmes. What is our motivation ? Let us remember that we who benefit from the present inequitable social arrangements are usually motivated to act to bring them into existence or preserve them as status quo. As I said earlier, it is not the poor who want to remain poor. The

non-poor want them to, because they benefit. It is not the rural weak who want to preserve their life styles of discrimination and poverty. It is the non-poor, whose structure of costs and benefits from the current unjust social arrangements are positive, who are motivated to want the persistence of the unequal arrangements. Adult Education's challenge in terms of motivation is a challenge addressed to us, of the well-to-do minority, the status quoists.

What of the international dimensions of Adult Education's mandate in this struggle for a just order ? To start with, I recall what was said earlier in this note, that the growing and wide international inequalities are a major cause for international inequalities which have been dilineated so far. This re-inforcement of inequalities within each of the Third World countries by the widening inequalities as between them and the industrialised countries occurs through the transmitting channels of technology transfers, multilateral and bilateral trading arrangements, their conditions and terms, through investments, particularly the private financial flows and the repatriation flows and the transnational firms' plans and capitalisation, and the political, economic and military power relationships that are being forged and imposed on the Third World countries. A simple but pointed indicator in this matter is that no amount of equalisation of relations between groups within the Third World countries reduces the international inequalities by one jot or tittle. Hence new international policies are needed to counter these growing international inequities, policies which have been for all countries, - in the North and South, - clearly and summarily expressed in the New International Economic Order (NIEO) set forth by the United Nations in 1974 and so fruitlessly debated in terms of commitment and action programmes by UNCTAD IV, V, UNIDO, the North-South Paris Confrontation, the Tokyo Round etal, NIEO Declaration is a clarion call to all of us members of the United Nations to:

> "Work urgently for the establishment of a New International Economic Order based on equity, sovereign equality, interdependence, common interest and co-operation among all states, irrespective of their economic and social systems which shall correct inequalities and redress injustice, make it possible to eliminate the widening gap between the developed and the developing countries and ensure steadily accelerating economic and social development and peace and justice for present and future generations " (15)

This involves on the one hand "the active, full and equal participating of the developing countries in the formulation and application of all decisions that concern the international community", and the accelerated development of the developing countries through expanding assistance (should the eighties see the transfer of 2 per cent of the combined GNP of the developed countries), debt rescheduling, just and equitable relationship between the exports and imports of the developing countries for improving their terms of trade, differential and non-reciprocal treatment for imports from developing countries, access to and transfer of the achievements of science and technology to the developing countries (98 per cent of R & D is located in the rich countries), ending the waste of food and natural resources, facilitating the functioning of producers'

associations, reforming the international monetary systems and helping in a radical transformation in the economies of the poor countries involving a 25 per cent share of world industrial production by 2000 AD. And then, there is the $300 billion annual outlay on arms, with 50% of the research in defence, space, atomic energy and supersonic air craft aimed at the Third World Markets.

Adult Education's task in helping to usher in the new International Economic Order is a multiple one - to train and retrain the manpower needed in the rich and poor countries, to translate and operationalise these political, economic and social objectives into action plans and programmes, and even more to diffuse values, orientation, attitudes and perspectives among the people so that the necessary economic arrangements and social institutions can be created to break the current deadlock between the rich and the poor countries in moving to a world of some justice and less inequality.

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THE INTERNATIONAL DIMENSIONS OF INEQUALITY AND ADULT EDUCATION

(A discussion note)

A.K. Jalaluddin

In order to have a meaningful discussion on this subject, it is desirable to delimit the scope of the topic and to focus attention on some of the interfaces and areas of confusion and controversy. The military, political, economic and intellectual dimensions of inequality among nations and groups of nations are rather well-known, thanks to the forums provided by the UN system and the non-aligned movement. Several recent publications of the Unesco and the declarations on new international order present factual analyses of the state of inequalities among the developed and the developing world with a deep insight into the causes of such inequalities.[1] However, the linkages between the dimensions of inequality within the developed and developing nations and the issues relating to the new international economic order have not yet received the adequate attention of adult educators. It is intended to highlight these linkages in the present note.

The Spectrum of Adult Education

For a long time, there had been a tendency to consider adult education as a temporary intervention in a developing society. With the recent discovery of millions of people who are considered functionally illiterate in the western countries, adult education has been receiving serious attention in these countries. In addition to this development, the concept of adult education in the context of lifelong education is becoming popular in many countries.

It may be noted that the high percentage of literacy and high level of general educational attainment of an average citizen in the developed countries in the West is not the result of any massive adult education programme. The industrial revolution, colonization of vast areas and the market forces in these countries were mainly reasponsible for the marked change in the educational scene in these countries during the last few centuries. While mass adult literacy and education campaigns launched by some of the socialist countries were responsible for eradication of illiteracy in these countries, one should not forget that such campaigns were part of an overall transformation of the political, economic and social power structures within the society. In both the settings, rapid expansion of education was the result of either scientific and technological revolution or political revolution or both. The traditional role of education as an instrument for maintenance of the given kind of society did not, however, actually undergo any qualitative changes as a result of these revolutions, except in the relative value-orientation of the content of education. In short, it was a frontal attack on social and economic relations and conscious utilisation of science and technology in the above contexts that made education, and for that matter adult education, play a relevant role in the social change in the developed countries rather than education itself performing an independent role in this transformation. There is no reason to believe that education will play a fundamentally different and independent role in the developing world.

Social Mobility and Education

Contrary to the wide-spread belief, education has failed to act as an equalising factor in the advanced western countries. The percentage of university students from the families of manual workers has hardly undergone any significant increase during the last half century. [2] The share of the total income going to the lowest income groups declined significantly during the last several decades in spite of the apparent equality of educational opportunity in these countries. [3] Similarly, the Black and White income gaps revealed the same discrepancies. [4] It is believed that the newly discovered 'functionally illiterate' population in the West really belongs to the community of manual workers.

Education in Developing Societies

While the economic benefits of education, as based on standard economic theory of labour market and wage competition, are measured in the light of 'outer' limits of consumption in an industrialised society; the situation is altogether different in a developing society, where it is the question of satisfying the 'inner' limits of survival of human beings.[5] The same yardstick cannot, therefore, be applied for the measurement of benefits of education in the developed and developing countries. The issues of industrialisation and adoption of modern science and technology in a developing society are vitally associated with the questions of survival and growth of the developing countries. They are not just matters of choice. The synthesis of the traditional beliefs, practices and culture with modern scientific temper has been telescoped into an unprecedented short time-frame in the developing societies today, often resulting in the erroneous belief that this scientific temper can be mapped onto the traditional matrix by expanding the formal educational system and by loading the curriculum. The urgency for the transition of an essentially oral communication system to a written one in a developing society is due to this contraction of the time scale. Ideally, education, particularly adult education, in a developing society should aim at developing the scientific temper and a modern ethos by utilizing the existing communication networks available within the society.

The importance of judicious assessment of the economic and non-economic benefits of adult literacy and education in a developing country cannot be minimised. Due to the limited absorbing power of trained manpower in a developing economy, it may not always be possible or necessary to justify investment in adult education on the basis of immediate economic returns alone. The role of adult education in directly enhancing the communication and living skills of an individual and indirectly promoting motivation in the society for change are equally important in this context. What is significant here is a pragmatic assessment of the relative importance of the benefits of adult education to the individual and the society in a given context. This dichotomy is at times referred to as the 'new' versus 'traditional' view of the role of education. [6]

Political Role of Adult Education

However broad may be the goals of an educational programme, its content is not likely to be value-free. The political value-orientation of education in conformity with the power differential in an unequal society is practically unavoidable. The explicit version of the political content has a general tendency to boil down to 'civics' education. While the introduction of 'civics' in adult education may play a significant role in democratising a developing society, such education has rather little appeal at present in the western countries. Hence the renewed interest in the political role of education in the developed world.

Never before in the history of education and adult education has the political role of education received so much attention as it has been receiving during the last two decades. The growth of interest in the subject almost coincides with the wide-spread outbursts of disaffection within the industrialised societies and alienation of the younger generation. This is also the result of a growing awareness of the evergrowing 'consumerism' and 'institutionalised waste' in the West. [7] The sixties and seventies also happened to be the period indicating an increased awareness among the developing countries of the growing gap between the developing and the developed countries.

The inadequacy of civics education in combating the situation, as realised by the western exponents of political socialisation, is due to its failure to secure the more informed participation of the disgruntled groups in the policy and acceptance of existing structures of political power. [8] However, the process of political socialization is sought to be accomplished not through any straight-forward route but through a circuitous anti-establishment posture. Thus, political socialization in the name of political education has been assigned the added role of pre-empting any genuine move against the status quo within nations and also against unequal international relations.

The National vs International Scene

The efficacy of adult education as a means of solving social problems, like poverty, may be viewed mainly from two angles: first, from the traditional point of view of the manpower development model, and second, from the point of view of its cultural or political role in creating a critical consciousness in the learners leading to independent thinking and action. The analogue in the international scene should have been the actual transfer of technology and technical know-how from the developed to the developing countries, on the one hand, and development of awareness among the poor nations of the need for ensuring social justice and promoting self-reliance, on the other.

While the above role of adult education within the national context is gaining wide recognition among the adult educators, the vindication of the poor nations' rights and their role in a common struggle for self-reliance and a new international economic order is yet to be recognised as a vital

area of interest in adult education.

Total Population as the Target

There is a general belief that the target groups in an adult education programme are the learners alone who generally belong to the disadvantaged or underprivileged sections of the society. While this may be a valid position when dealing with the literacy or economic content of such programmes, this is definitely not the case when one deals with the cultural, social and political aspects, which are equally relevant to the rest of the society. This is more so in view of the fact that education happens to be a sub-system in the overall political, economic, social and cultural system of the society. The public policies affecting the life of the underprivileged section of the society are decided by agencies and people who are not always aware of the possible implications of their policies and the parameters that determine the success or failure of these policies.

Adult education acquires an added dimension in this context, namely the creation of social and political awareness among the total population about the need for rational analysis of the reality and appropriate action for continuing change in the society in the direction of social justice. The media support for adult education, therefore, becomes more significant in the light of its role in educating the general public and influencing policy decisions.

On the international scene, the above role of adult education should include identification and analysis of the imbalances and creation of awareness among the developed nations about the growing danger of perpetuating the status quo and the need for promoting a new international economic order in their own interest.[9]

New International Information Order

The question of the domination of mass media by the developed countries emerged as the critical issue in the discussions on freedom of information and the new international information order. The same concern has been voiced most recently during the discussions on the Declaration on Mass Media in the last General Conference of Unesco held in November 1978 and the deliberations of the McBride Commission recently appointed by Unesco. [10]

The developing countries have repeatedly expressed their reservations over the doctrine of 'freedom of information' persistently propogated by the advanced countries of the West on the ground that the so-called 'free flow' from the developed to the developing countries - often biased, prejudicial and unimaginative. The growing concern of the developing countries is based on several factors:

> high percentage of illiteracy and the limited impact of written materials produced in the country and a greater impact and, at times, unwanted influence, of the powerful foreign electronic

media and media soft-ware;

reinforcement of the above apprehensions on the basis of the biased role played by the influential foreign media on the issues of the rights of the developing countries to freely adopt their own strategies for development, direct and indirect domination of the developing countries by the developed countries, etc.;

growing doubt about the actual intentions of the big media of the developed countries due to the recent revelations and confessions made in the western political circles and media themselves.

The New Intellectual Offensive

Foreign policy objectives of many developed countries are pursued not only through their media and communication network but also through education and research. Adult education, due to its legitimate political overtones, offers a soft area of interaction to these countries. It is natural to examine the motivation for the increasing investment in the developed countries on area research focussing on the problems of the developing world. Use of artificial satellites for remote sensing and collecting of data of various kinds, availability of fast computers and sophisticated gadgets for quick processing of such data, etc. by social science researchers from the developed countries specialising in the affairs of developing countries may appear to be professionally efficient; but there are growing indications that these data and research bases are being directly or indirectly used for putting the poor countries in a weak bargaining position and also for influencing policy decisions in the developing countries. [11] Wide-spread testing of new drugs and doubtful birth control pills in the developing countries is a well-known case in point.

Excessive interest of western scholars in the study of sensitive issues like religious and caste conflicts, ethnicity, linguistic and tribal differences, etc. in the developing countries may also arouse legitimate doubt about the intentions of these projects, which are often officially funded by the developed countries or international agencies. While the interest in the developed countries to promote adult education in the poor countries is a welcome development, adult educators in the latter countries are yet to be convinced that the growing interest among some adult educators from the developed countries in group conflicts at the micro-level is in the immediate national interest of a developing society or is in coherence with the ideology for social and economic transformation adopted by the concerned countries.

The apparent radicalism of this school of adult educators is generally confined to highlighting inequalities within the poor countries, and at the same time it debunks the independent development efforts in these countries as 'economism' There is also a growing tendency among the adult educators of the above persuasion to visualise adult education as an independent variable capable of bringing about a structural change in the society by by-passing the existing social and political organisations.

One cannot but express serious concern about such development in the international adult education movement not because a structural change in the existing developing societies is uncalled for, but because of the naivete with which social engineering is sought to be promoted.

The Preferred Role of Adult Education in Developed and Developing Societies.

Adult education can, indeed, play a crucial role in the realisation of the New International Economic Order, as set forth by the United Nations. But, it would be unwise to assume that adult education is for the developing countries alone and within them only for the underprivileged sections of the society. It is, in fact, essential that the privileged few in developing countries and the developed nations as a whole should be educated to translate the dream of NIEO into a reality.

The developed nations need to be educated on their responsibility in ensuring the creation of a world order which is not based on over-consumption and exploitation. Problems of finite resources endangered by indiscriminate consumption, environmental pollution and extinction of non-human life forms have become serious problems on account of the developments in the developed countries since Industrial Revolution.

Preservation of natural resources, prevention of further pollution, and prohibition of wasteful practices can be some of the major issues of adult education within the developed countries. Such an educational programme in these countries could have a salutary effect on the international economic order which in itself would prove beneficial for the developing countries. The philosophy of sharing which the developing countries have practised to their detriment, should now be taught to the developed countries, so that there is international distributive justice and well-being.

Likewise, in the developing nations, the privileged few should be made aware of their role in the national development and levelling of inequalities. They should be educated to realise their responsibilities as well as the alternatives to which the weaker sections will find recourse for their own amelioration.

The developing countries must themselves initiate decisive measures to accelerate economic development and social change in their own way with a sense of urgency. It is well-known that the growing gap between the developed and developing countries cannot be reduced by following any traditional method, which emphasises increase in GNP or balance of trade alone, without actually attacking the distributive aspects of the economic benefits and mobilisation of the masses for active participation in the process of development. A pre-requisite in this direction is enhanced communication, particularly interpersonal interaction leading to learning and creation of the awareness of the predicament of an individual, his community and the nation at large and an international citizenship based

on an awareness of national interest.

Acknowledgement

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1. Some of the major documents published in this area are:

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II. International Conference on World Crises in Education, Williamsburg, Virginia, USA, 5-9 October, 1967. (Proceedings published as "Essays on World Education: the Crisis of Supply and Demand, Ed. George Z.. Beredy Oxford University Press, 1969).

III. Learning to Be

- The Report of the International Commission on the Development of Education, established by Unesco under the chairmanship of Edgar Faure, 1972.

IV. Declaration on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order.

- 2229th Plenary Meeting of the UN, 1 May 1974.

V. The Cocoyoe Declaration adopted by the Participants in the UNEP/ UNCTAD Symposium on "Patterns of Resource Use, Environment and Development Strategies."

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VI. Moving Towards Change

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- Unesco ROEAO, Bangkok, and National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration, New Delhi.

X. New International Information Order

- Declaration on Mass Media adopted ny Unesco at its General Conference in November 1975, Paris

(Published in "Media and the Third World",

- D.R. Mankekar, Indian Institute of Mass Communication, June, 1979).

Some of the relevant excerpts from the Cocoyoe Declaration are:

- "Thirty years have passed since the signing of the United Nations Charter launched the effort to establish a new international order. Today, the order has reached a critical turning point. Its hopes of creating a better life for the whole human family have been largely frustrated.

- "to this day, at least three quarters of the world's income, investment, services and almost all of the world's resources are in the hands of one quarter of its people.

- "In the international system, the powerful nations have secured the poor countries' raw materials at low price.....

- "At the same time, the very cheapness of the materials was one element in encouraging the industrialised nations to indulge in careless and extravagant use of the imported materials.

- "Indeed the pre-emption by the rich of a disproportionate share of key resources conflicts directly with the longer term interests of the poor by impairing their ultimate access to resources necessary to their development and by increasing their art.

- "The overall effect of such biased economic relationships can best be seen in the contrast in consumption. A North American or a European child, on an average, consumes outrageously more than his Indian or African counterpart - a fact which makes it specious to attribute pressure on world resources entirely to the growth of Third World Population.

- "... Since a lack of resources for full human development is, as the Bucharest Conference on Population clearly recognised, one of the continuing causes of explosive population growth, to deprive nations of the means of development directly exacerbates their demographic problems. These unequal economic relationships contribute directly to environmental pressures".

2. Ted Tapper and Brian Salter, "Education and the Political Order - Changing Patterns of Class Control", The Macmillan Press Ltd., London and Basinstoke, 1978.

3. Lester C. Thurow, "Education and Economic Equality", published in "Economics and Education Policy: A Reader", Open University Set Book, 1977.

   According to the author, "From 1949 to 1969 (in USA), the share of total income going to the lowest fifths has dropped from 3.2 per cent to 2.6 per cent while the share going to the highest fifths rose from 44.3 per cent to 46.3 per cent. Page 356.

4. Ibid. p. 356.

5. The Cocoyoe Declaration as cited above.

6. See, for example, Philip H. Coombs, 'Educational Planning in the Light of Economic Requirements', in 'Forecasting Manpower Needs for the Age of Science, OEEC, 1960, p. 26.

7. B. Chattopadhyay, 'Zero-Growth', 'Basic Needs', 'Appropriate Technology', and the Gimmickry of Non-Formal Education', mimeographed article, New Delhi, 1977.

8. See, for example, G. Almond and S. Verba, 'The Civic Culture', Little, Brow, 1965; L. Milbrath, "Political Participation", Rand McNally, 1965; L. Althusser, "Idealogy and Ideological State Apparatuses", in "Education: Structure and Society".

9. The situation is somewhat similar to what is said in the Unesco publication, "Moving Towards Change" - Some Thoughts on the New International Economic Order", Unesco, Paris, 1976:

"The present inequalities between peoples and the injustice of international relations have made the developing countries exert a critical pressure upon the world. As a result of this pressure, in itself legitimate, those in power may have to recourse to authoritarian solutions or even solutions based on force. This would lead to confrontations fraught with consequences for the whole mankind, since deprived peoples can resist force and even render it inoperative to a considerable extent if they want to, as both ancient and recent history shows. This is why the establishment of a new international economic order is an opportunity, to establish peace which we must not let slip."

10. An authentic description of the events as witnessed by D.R. Mankekar in his various capacities including that of the Chairman of the Co-ordination Committee of the Non-Aligned Countries Press Agencies Pool, has been given in his book, "Media and the Third World", Indian Institute of Mass Communication, New Delhi, 1979.

11. See C.D. Rowley, "The Politics of Educational Planning in Developing Countries", Unesco, International Institute for Educational Planning, Paris, 1971.

"Very heavy pressure may be used by foreign governments wishing to use the national education system for their own purposes. They may subsidise institutions, or offer education and training of key personnel. These facilities and forms of assistance may be compared with the whole range of commodities on offer to a newly independent country; although the period of highly competitive offer may be drawing to a close. A major educational handicap of the developing country is the inadequacy of its publishing industry, marked by shortage of paper and other raw materials, and of skills needed for the writing and production of text books and translation of important books into the languages of instruction. If a single foreign government supplies the skills and the text books, it will have a profound influence on the whole development of the new nation. The position has been one of open competition between the major power groupings." pp. 28-29.

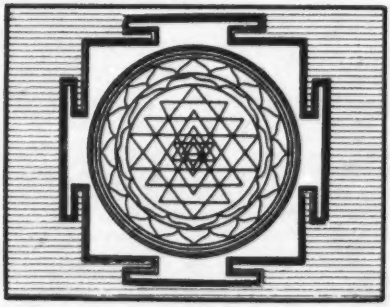
See, for example, the report of the Congress Committee on "Winning

the Cold War", and "International Operations and Foreign Policy", as quoted by D.R. Mankekar in the above publication, p. 18:

- "Certain foreign policy objectives can be pursued by dealing directly with the people of foreign countries rather than with their governments, through the use of modern instruments and techniques of communications, it is possible today to reach large or influential segments of national populations - to inform them, to influence their attitudes, and at times perhaps even to motivate them to a particular course of action. These groups, in turn, are capable of exerting noticeable, even decisive pressures on their governments."

And also, Herbert Schiller, (pp. 18-19):

- "Gunboat diplomacy is now an item in the antiquities show case, but communication diplomacy is a very thriving business of the moment. Consider the rich possibilities of radio-television broadcast facilities in a society lacking in industrial base."



SOME NOTES ON THE ROLE OF ADULT EDUCATION IN REDUCING INEQUALITY WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO THE RURAL CONTEXT IN LATIN AMERICA

Hugo Fernandez

1. Inequality

When viewed as a whole, the question of inequality is an extremely complex one. The fact that it necessarily involves a comparison between the way in which different groups of people live, what they may expect and hope, and the things they can do to change their situation, means that questions of possibility and - above all - desirability, also enter the picture.

Many sets of arguments have been developed over the centuries to prove that equality is desirable, necessary and, for many, the final goal of human development and progress. Arguments have also been put forward to prove that inequality is inevitable, just, and to some extent even desirable. Obviously, behind the latter arguments, a justification may also be found for the preservation of a given system of unequal distribution of property, means of production and privileges in society.

Much of the discussion has taken place in ethical terms. A lot of it has become clouded by issues of desirability and inevitability associated with "human nature", religious beliefs and "the natural order of things". Most of this discussion, while progressing in philosophical terms, has stagnated in terms of actually reducing inequality in the world. Furthermore, being equal means not only to have the same things, and the same possibilities, but also to see each other as truly equal - and act accordingly. This makes it difficult even to realise at what point a change in the degree of equality has been achieved in a given social context. Thus, for example, a greater opening of educational opportunities and of the labour market to women not only does not automatically lead to greater equality between the sexes, but it has often resulted in the appearance of new forms of exploitation and less real equality in every-day life (which in turn, as we all realise, does not mean that education and remunerated work should remain in the hands of men). A similar problem was faced during the sixties with the racial integration movement. At that time, it became apparent that in order to achieve integration, people and institutions, far from being "colour-blind", should be more "colour conscious"; that the actions for eliminating racial discrimination should not disregard discriminatory practices but, in some cases, should even engage in some form of discrimination to ensure the final achievement of meaningful equality.

By its very nature, the concept of equality among men is also very hard to grasp given the way society is organised. With human society as we know it, it is hard to conceive equality among the members of a community, or a village; it is extremely difficult to imagine it at the level of a nation. It seems an impossibility among nations. The existence of societies which are more just than others, however, implies at least philosophically - that greater equality may still be achieved... within each society, and among all societies.

In the modern world, progress towards equality seems to have been less the result of the ages-old ethical debate and more a direct consequence of a strong commitment to equity. This is not intended as a play on words. Equity, in this sense, is taken to mean assuring for each person a sufficient share of goods and services, necessary to lead a life relatively free from hunger and disease, and with reasonable comfort and well-being.

Undoubtedly, "fuzzy" words and expressions such as "well-being", "comfort" and "relatively free" are not enough, and may only serve to stress that even those advances of which we are so proud, are also relative. In many Western nations - and certainly in Latin America - a growing concern with equity may have gravitated away from traditional preoccupations with equality. For the latter, redistribution is essential: it is not only a question of what a person is or has, but also what a person is and has, in relation to others. Equity, on the other hand, prescribes a minimum of material and non-material possessions which each and all persons should have (regardless of what others have). Redistribution which may be an issue, only becomes one when this is impossible to achieve without it.

Naturally, the debate on equality should not cease (and will not cease, no matter what is done to stop it). The debate on equity, in turn, is only starting. While it should not supersede the other, the growing concern with the improvement of living conditions for great numbers of people in the world, requires that serious, systematic consideration be given to the ways in which redistribution is necessary in order to achieve it.

2. Poverty

Poverty is one of the most important manifestations of inequality (though not the only one). The elimination of poverty - a major concern of all programmes focusing on equity - would go a long way in reducing inequality.

While poverty is easy to recognise, an operational definition of poverty is not easily developed. Generically, it has been defined 1/ as "the absence of goods and services required for satisfying the basic needs for life in society. Cultural mores that orient the identification of problems bind the determination of the level or degree of poverty to definite places and time, acknowledging variations from country to country.

Despite the recognition of this difficulty, various attempts have been made to arrive at working definitions of poverty. 2/ Income or costs necessary for satisfying basic needs can be adopted as criteria, as can be an approximation identifying the rural poor in terms of their income relative

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1/ Inter-American Institute of Agricultural Sciences (IICA): Notes and Proposals on the Design and Implementation of War on Poverty Projects in Latin America and the Caribbean, p. 1, IICA, San Jose, Costa Rica, 1979.

2/ Devronowski, Jan. Poverty: Its Meaning and Measurement. Development and Change. The Hague 8 (4): 192-200, 1977.

to the country's average per capita rural income".

A recent study [3] by the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America has found it useful to further develop this concept, differentiating between the poor and the indigent, for operational purposes. Indigent families are those whose nutritional needs would not be satisfied even if the total family income were to be spent in food. Families are classified as poor according to the percentage of total income devoted to this purpose. While it is viewed by some as a mere question of "degree", this differentiation provides a very useful approach to critical poverty in operational terms.

Following these criteria, Table 1 shows a broad picture of overall poverty and indigence for some countries of Latin America, with estimates for the region as a whole. These are presented here for the purpose of showing the incidence of poverty, and the wide variations existing from country to country rather than for detailed analysis.

Table 1

Estimates on the Incidence of Poverty in Latin America, around 1970 [4]

Country	Percentage of households between the poverty line			Percentage of households between the indigence line		
	Urban	Rural	National	Urban	Rural	National
Argentina	5	19	8	1	1	1
Brazil	35	73	49	15	42	25
Colombia	38	54	45	14	23	18
Costa Rica	15	30	24	5	7	6
Chile	12	25	17	3	11	6
Honduras	40	75	65	15	57	45
Mexico	20	49	34	6	16	12
Peru	28	68	50	8	39	25
Uruguay	10	-	-	4	-	-
Venezuela	20	36	25	6	19	10
Latin America	26	62	40	10	34	19

3/ CEPAL. La Pobreza en America Latina: Situación, Evolución y Orientaciones de Política. CEPAL, Santiago, Chile, 1979

4/ Altimir, Oscar. La Dimensión de la Pobreza en América Latina. Cuadernos de la CEPAL. No. 27, Santiago, Chile, 1979.

According to the same source, some 113 million Latin Americans were poor around 1970 (72 million in rural areas and a little over 40 million in urban centres). At that time, poverty was mostly a rural phenomenon (62% of all rural people were poor, as against 26% of urban inhabitants). Approximately one half of the poor were considered indigent. If structure and incidence of poverty are combined with rural-urban migration estimates, projections for 1980 would indicate that the region has some 147 million poor this year, of which 67 million could be classified as urban, and 80 million as rural 5/. Although available data processing levels make it impossible to prove it empirically, the major tendencies appear to be that poverty is not being reduced significantly, either in absolute or in relative terms. Also, a shift in the relative incidence of poverty seems to be occuring from rural to urban areas, though maintaining unchanged the absolute number of poor people in the former.

Eliminating - or reducing - poverty, even if it is yet to be effectively tackled by the Latin American nations, increasingly constitutes cause for concern among them. The old debate on equality is now expressed as the need for action against poverty, because:

" - it contradicts the principles of equal opportunities and universal participation in the collective productive efforts;

- society suffers the loss of untapped intellectual and productive potential from a significant portion of the population;

- the expansion of internal markets is limited by insufficient effective demand, and

- urban and rural population become increasingly insecure " 6/

The same document by the Inter-American Institute of Agricultural Sciences, however, indiates that:

"Rural poverty is difficult to solve because it is not an accidental occurrence nor a homogenous phenomenon. "

It is not accidental because it results from the manner in which land was occupied and the models that were chosen for development, that have prevailed historically in Latin America and the Caribbean. Poverty specific to a given area reflected, and perhaps still reflects, the prevailing socio-economic system. This statement is based on theories that make poverty a necessary consequence of our system, when viewed globally. It is also recognised by those that still trust the potential aptitude of different global systems to resolve the problem, and that consider the root of poverty as a historically caused phenomenon or as the result of a particular specialisation in the productive process.

5/ Galofré, Fernando. Pobreza y los Primeros Años de la Niñez. Situación en América Latina y El Caribe, Proyecto Interinstitucional sobre Pobreza Crítica. Santiago, Chile, 1979.

6/ IICA, op. cit., supra. p.1

The reasons for poverty can only be interpreted within the particular context of the economic, social and political system in which they occur. Moreover, it is within this very context that the concrete possibilities for resolving them must be determined. The fact that this situation is increasingly seen as a "problem" indicates that, whatever its functional historical background, poverty already represents a non-desirable consequence which affects significant and increasing segments of our societies. This is the situation which will be confronted within the political objectives which define for each country and for each occasion, that which is desirable and possible. To resolve the problem, though, comprehensive approaches will not work if they do not coincide with the particular rules of behaviour governing the different systems and individuals that work within them.

If rural poverty and intents to resolve it are considered social and not accidental occurrences, it should be clear that it is necessary to carefully analyse what is trying to be corrected in each case and what possibilities there are for dealing with the problem. Even when the undesirable situations resulted from similar historical models of land occupation and economic development, there exist socially complex regional and local differences within Latin America and the Caribbean which require that we formulate a complex typology of poverty and marginality.

It is not our intent to discuss here the various typologies that have been proposed in available literature on the subject (1). Nevertheless, basic "types" are differentiated, such as the rural wage-earner, the minifundia owner, the share-cropper, the rural artisan and others, the characteristics of which may vary from place to place. Needs, possibilities for resolving them and applicable instruments also vary. Therefore, the more exact the typology, the easier it will be to identify the services, organisational forms and production systems needed to resolve each case.

Rural poverty appears to be associated with a series of related manifestations, which would allow for the development of a composite poverty index, as long as they can be grouped into two or three sets of highly correlated variables. Available empirical evidence confirms that elements associated with poverty interact, and that their combined effect is greater than the sum of the effects of individual elements (2)".

Some of these manifestations are: insufficient employment opportunities; limited access to land and water; physical and organisational dispersion of the rural poor; nutrition and health conditions; limited access to basic

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(1) See: Scandizzo, P. El Análisis Financiero de los Proyectos de Desarrollo Rural. In: Marzocca, A. (Ed.) Tecnología para el Pequeño Agricultor, IICA. Serie Informes de Conferencias, Cursos y Reuniones No. 134, Montevideo, Uruguay. 1977.

(2) Kaminsky, Mario. La Pobreza en América Latina: Análisis Quantitativo Comparative Multivariante con Indicadores Sintéticos Alternativos, Brasil, Chile, Costa Rica, México; CIDES-CIENES. Versión Preliminar. Buenos Aires, Argentina, marzo de 1979.

services and availability of technology.

3. Countries' Approaches to Reducing Rural Poverty in Latin America and the Caribbean

It has been pointed out that poverty is not accidental, but rather that it is the result of a particular form of economic development. Nor is it homogeneous, since it involves different situations, and possible solutions. Just as the poor have been regarded as fulfilling a function in the present socio-economic systems of many countries in Latin America, problem identification and the possibilities of resolving them must be seen within the actual context of the political systems. Successful action may be carried out only to the degree that the countries commit themselves to it.

So far, the countries concern for tackling rural poverty has been embodied in two main approaches:

- that which attempts to modify systematically, with a multisector focus, the complex of causes and manifestations of poverty, and
- that which deals with poverty in a partial, fragmented manner, either in specific pre-selected geographical areas or by eliminating one or more of its manifestations.

The first of these approaches has only been applied in Cuba and more recently its adoption has been announced by the Government of Nicaragua. In both cases, its scope is defined in terms of the introduction of deep structural changes in the economic system prevailing before it was adopted. It is understood in this view that the major factors conditioning the continued existence of rural poverty may be manipulated as part of an over-all economic strategy. It is also understood that all the adult population is to be incorporated in the process of production, under conditions which will make more equitable the access of all workers to the benefits of development.

The active participation of the population in defining the carrying out of these new models for the social organisation of production, follows the general guidelines and the over-all political and economic order established in these countries.

The major requirement of this approach is the equitable distribution of productive resources, particularly natural resources and capital. In this sense, it involves the consolidation of units of production, with capital labour and technology sufficient for the achievement of their economic and social objectives. Usually, it also requires the reorganisation of land tenure and land use according to more rational patterns of enterprise consolidation and of utilisation of natural resources. A significant improvement or rural social services and production support action is also part of this approach.

Additionally , new planning methods and institutional management techniques have been developed, to ensure a concerted multi-sector focus on the improvement of living conditions and the reduction of poverty.

Rather than attempting such radical changes in the socio-economic system, most Latin American Governments have focused on the second approach, which views actions aimed at reducing poverty within the scope of moderate adjustments in development strategy. These have been of two main types:

a. "integrated" actions within well defined geographical areas, or "pockets". These may be far-reaching in their conception and application but, because of their territorial limitations, they still only resolve a part of the problem.

b. actions defining a poor "target population" to which services will be provided, such as production support (credit, technical assistance, agricultural research), marketing support (supply of agrochemicals and other inputs, storage facilities, retail outlets for food and other basic articles) or social services (education, health, etc.).

In the first case, integrated rural development programmes are the most common. Their major shortcoming seems to be of an operational nature: management at the local level and highly concentrated investments for relatively small areas. Instability over time and the fact that much of the investment is dispersed among the non-poor also reduce the efficiency of these programmes.

Support actions for specific "poor" target populations, on the other hand, often suffer from the operational inertia of established institutions. Thus, in many cases, programmes designed with a focus on the target population end-up supporting larger farmers - or even commercial agriculture - which are better prepared to utilise them. In all cases, firm, continuing political support seems to be essential to overcome this inertia.

4. Some Conclusions

4.1 While the debate on equality has remained in the background, there seems to be growing concern among the countries of Latin America for the development and application of concrete measures aimed at reducing rural poverty and improving the living conditions of the rural poor. Thus, in operational terms, poverty as a manifestation of inequality seems to be an important focus of national efforts.

4.2 Despite significant variations from country to country, rural poverty exists throughout the region. While its over-all growth in relative terms has been slow, its numerical importance has remained unchanged. Urban poverty appears to be growing faster as a result of internal migrations.

4.3 Even though sectorally oriented poverty-focused programmes have had some success in many countries, their over-all impact has not been significant. Furthermore, sectoral strategies designed for this target

population often find difficulties in reaching it, and mostly benefit better-off sections of the rural population.

4.4 The continuing success and impact of programmes aimed at reducing rural poverty has usually been associated with firm political support over time, and with a broad commitment to deep distributive or re-distributive measures affecting land, capital and services.

4.5 Continuing political support also seems to be necessary in order to overcome institutional inertia which hinders the adaptation of service delivery-systems to non-conventional clienteles.

5. Four Major Approaches to Adult Education

The range of educational experiences generically grouped under the name of adult education is quite varied in the world today. These differences in concept exist not only between developed and Third World countries, but also within the context of the developing nations themselves. In a way, the preoccupation about the kinds of educational experiences which should be made available to adults has closely followed the evolution of broader concepts of economic development, social change and the organisation of society.

The four major currents of thought and action have dealt with adult education within one of four major categories: literacy training; occupational education; continuing (or life-long) education and "education for liberation".

Both theory and practical experiences for these four major approaches are ample and well developed. The application of all of them has been attempted - at least experimentally - in the rural areas of Latin America, at one time or another. Their usefulness and functionality in reducing poverty and - to a certain extent - inequality, have been closely associated with the nature of the political model presiding over the achievement of national objectives in the latter areas.

6. Literacy Training

The greatest number of illiterates and the highest percentages of illiteracy in Latin America are found among the poorest populations in the rural areas. Until only a few decades ago, literacy itself was mostly an urban phenomenon in most countries of the region.

The above is true because, since the establishment and expansion of formal schooling (through religious institutions or by the state), literacy has been overwhelmingly a function of the system's coverage of the school-age population. Historically, it is a well-known fact that the formal school system was developed significantly in the rural areas of Latin America only after urban demands had been more or less reasonably satisfied. These countries with the lowest figures for rural illiteracy also show a number of common characteristics; public investments in primary education

have been been relatively high for many decades; teacher training has existed as a viable professional alternative for a similar time; a high percentage of the population is urban, or an important rural-urban migration flow has existed for some time 7/; urban enrolments have been consistently high (above 70% of the corresponding age-cohorts); and a fairly sophisticated labour market - closely linked with educational attainment - already exists in the urban centres.

This is the case of Uruguay, Argentina and Chile, and to a lesser extent Cuba, Costa Rica and Panama. Although most of the English-speaking Caribbean countries show relatively low figures for over-all illiteracy, their size, communications systems and historical background may be more relevant to their particular context.

The opposite also holds true. Countries with the highest rural illiteracy rates tend to have higher percentages of people living in rural areas; the expansion of the urban school system is more recent, or has developed at a slower rate; there are grave deficiencies in teacher training (both in quantity and quality) and rural teaching posts are not considered desirable jobs. Given the gravitation of urban actual or potential political demands, it seems unlikely that expenditures in rural education will receive much greater priority than they hold today, until such time as opportunities in urban areas are better satisfied over a considerable period of time.

Excepting some cases, to which I refer below, almost no priority is (or could be) attached to investments that would offer literacy training opportunities to poor adult illiterates in rural areas, in open competition with urban demands, or even with rural demand for formal primary education. Historically, as it was mentioned before, rural literacy has mostly risen as a combined result of the expansion of formal education for children, and the death of the (mostly) illiterate population in the older age groups. It has been suggested that the utilisation of non-conventional media and methods could - by reducing costs - make adult literacy programmes more viable by reducing the threat of their competition for resources. In most cases, though, even successful unorthodox literacy efforts have been limited in scope and coverage, and have retained many of the problems of post-literacy follow-up work as other, more conventional programmes.

Thus, with the exception of Cuba (and Peru for a short period) most efforts in adult education have been almost irrelevant in reducing rural literacy. The effort undertaken in Cuba was not an isolated one. Rather, it was an integral part of a broader political effort aimed at the transformation of society, in which literacy training, together with other programmes

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7/ A 1969 OAS Study on Migrations in Peru reached the interesting conclusion that a desire for education (available in urban areas) ranked high among the reasons given by young migrants - particularly women - for abandoning rural areas. See: Organization of American States; Migration to the Lima Callao Metropolitan Area: OAS, Washington, D.C., 1969.

and services, played a key role for the integration of the rural population in the construction of a new society.

The narrow adult education focus on literacy training in Latin America, has often been associated with prevailing development models stressing the effort of the individual as a key factor for economic development, progress, and equity. Through the acquisition of reading and writing skills an individual person may seek to improve his condition, with a higher paying job, better access to technology and specialised skills, and some basis for migrating to the city.

The truth is that literacy has been a key factor in upward social mobility, access to public services and geographical gravitation towards better jobs and opportunities. As it was said before though, it is also true that in the near future, most chances for literacy will come to the rural areas through formal education - or the isolated, numerically marginal adult education programmes - rather than from massive, concentrated efforts to provide new educational opportunities to adults.

7. Job Training

In the more developed countries, the periodic recycling of the labour force - particularly in the industrial and services sectors - through education programmes for adults has been commonplace. Changing technology, requiring specialised skills, highly structured labour markets, and salary systems, are only some of the factors accounting for their relatively fast development.

Industrial development and job differentiation in (urban) Latin America have demanded the establishment of job training programmes sponsored by the state or by industry itself. They have been patterned - in great measure - after the models set up in more developed nations. Some institutions like INCE in Venezuela, INA in Costa Rica, SENA in Colombia and IFARHU in Panama have existed for many years, with growing resources and impact.

By their very nature, however, they are already incorporated in the formal operation of the labour market for the acquisition of skills associated with the modern sector of the economy. This means that their scope is mostly urban, that their main clientele is to be found among those who already hold a job - or have a good perspective of obtaining one - and that in most cases they have literacy as a pre-requisite. In short, their potential students will not be the poor, and particularly the rural poor.

Some efforts have been devoted to this kind of education in the rural areas. A good example is the agricultural extension service set up in many countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. This service usually combines education for agricultural production, technical assistance in the farm

and occasional support in production-related incentives, such as credit, agricultural inputs, etc. Although successful in raising production and productivity for many crops, traditional extension services seldom reach the poor farmer: the technology they use often requires more land, more capital and more skills than the small farmer has at his disposal. The finely-tuned production systems of subsistence farmers do not allow for higher risks, or "unwarranted" experimentation... and often they are right. Naturally, traditional extension services do not reach the poorest of the poor: the landless, the seasonal workers or the unemployed.

There are some examples in Latin America of relatively successful job training programmes in rural areas, though they have not yet expanded significantly beyond the experimental, or pilot stage. The "pancoger" programme in Colombia, emphasizing food production among very small farmers, with a focus on nutrition, is interesting. So are some of the home-industry experiments going on in various countries, and a Jamaican project which trains "young adults" from rural areas in a combination of literacy and skills useful for urban areas.

Again in Cuba, the expansion of basic services to rural areas has permitted to combine literacy and job training in an impressive scale. Once again, though, in this case education for rural adults is part of a broader scheme, which has included new forms of social organisation of production and a basic concept of "urbanising" rural life.

For the most part, however, as in the case of literacy, this form of adult education, which does in fact facilitate upward mobility, is mostly an urban phenomenon, does not reach significant segments of the rural population, tends to serve farmers who already have some access to other services and only rarely reaches the poor.

As in the first case, also, the organisational philosophy of the most common types of rural job training mostly conceives development as an individual endeavour. It rests on the assumption that individual behaviour, improved by the transfer of knowledge and skills, may in the normal course of events help the individual reach better standards of living. This process - aggregated at the level of "rural areas" - is conceived in this approach as an effort towards equity through the progressive reduction of poverty and the increasing urbanisation of the rural population.

8. Continuing Education

Continuing education in the rural areas has never existed in Latin America, beyond experimental, isolated programmes. Some experiences in the highly urbanised rural areas of English speaking Caribbean nations (Barbados is a good example) are totally assimilated with urban educational work, and do not differ very much from similar work currently underway in Europe and North America.

Most of the programmes we know along these lines, are either part of highly complex labour-force permanent recycling schemes, or they are geared to older population groups, revealing a growing concern for the elderly in the more developed countries.

In all cases, a fully developed educational system, completely covering demand for formal schooling in society, seems to be a pre-requisite for the appearance of continuing education schemes.

The undifferentiated occupational structure of the rural population in Latin America makes it unlikely that adult education movements, or the political decision to invest in adult education, would select this approach for job training. The heavy presence of women in the rural labour force, and the length of the productive life of most of the rural population, on the other hand, diminish by far the potential importance of this type of programme in comparison with investment in other services, such as primary health care.

9. Education as Liberation ("educacion liberadora")

The fourth approach, viewing education as a tool for liberation and as a transcendental practice of man's freedom, addresses itself directly to the question of equality. Originally a Latin America contribution to the democratic values of culture, as presented by Paulo Freire, it now stands as a different way of conceiving the educational experience not only throughout the Third World, but also among educational practitioners in the more developed countries.

Sufficient has been written, and is already known among the participants, to repeat in these notes what may be easily found elsewhere about the concept and practice of this type of approach. Our main concern here is to explore briefly some of the major implications of "educacion liberadora" within the context of reducing inequality in rural Latin America. Four points seem to have a direct bearing on this question.

First of all, this type of education is difficult to conceive as an individual enterprise. The educational experience implies a task which becomes social by the very act of performing it in relation to the social object.

Thus, secondly, it is also different to conceive "educacion liberadora" as separated from - as a mere observer of - the social object. By developing a new collective as well as individual understanding of its essence and functioning, participants in the process do not educate themselves until a plan of changing the social object becomes a part of their perception and their interaction with it.

Thirdly, "educacion liberadora" can only be performed by equals, who

explore and perceive together, and engage together in the construction of knowledge.

Finally, "educacion liberadora" can only be aimed at equality, since it requires the transformation of the social object in accordance with the development of a new shared perception of its nature and its relationship with those who are changing it.

In operative terms, the exercise of this type of education is very demanding of the milieu in which it takes place. In most of the countries of Latin America, where the official commitment with equity does not always involve the assurance of continuing political support, education as a social task is not readily accepted. Neither is the idea that education and the social object eventually become one, or that teacher and student both teach and learn. Nor is it always acceptable that equality is the final goal of education.

Also in operative terms, then, "educacion liberadora" threatens many of the principles on which a certain form of social organisation rests, particularly when society itself - no matter whether at the "macro" or at the "micro" levels - becomes the object.

In practical terms, therefore, "educacion liberadora" in the rural areas of Latin America is not widespread, and only rarely becomes the philosophy behind educational institutions. Whatever attempts have been made to operate on its principles have either disappeared, have remained isolated, or they have been substituted by more conventional job training, technical assistance or straight literacy programmes.

If this type of education is developed with poor people in the rural areas, it leads inevitably to their actually doing something to change their access to productive resources, or their relationship to other groups in society. By achieving this, this type of adult education becomes disfunctional and official support disappears. Because of its nature, it can only marshall political support among those governments which, on the one hand, hold a firm commitment to broad social change and, on the other hand, are also committed to its achievement by promoting and accepting a high degree of grass-root participation in the process.

Any attempt to engage in "educacion liberadora" within political systems which do not hold these two basic ideas, has either been neutralised or subsists on a strategy of "concealment" which, in turn, requires the existence of clear, longer term, political goals. This usually means that the movement behind this type of education will inevitably become politically entangled with concrete issues arising from the educational process itself.

Still there are many separated attempts to do some kind of "educacion liberadora" in rural Latin America today. It is beyond the scope of these notes to dwell on the types of institutions that are doing it. Suffice it to say that they cover a broad range of educational, political, religious, and even international endeavours. As the rural areas become a graveyard for many such programmes, some successful - apparently irreversible - experiences have also been registered.

In most cases, these successful experiences have shown some common traits: there has been a high degree of campesino ("peasant") control over the programme; some productive resources - however limited - have been available, or accessible; among participants there exists a background of employment, or participation, in commercial agriculture enterprises, with some degree of social division of labour, and in almost all cases, a productive organisation of some sort quickly developed. No systematic attempt has been advanced, that we know of, to fully understand the "operative" principles of success even though, as will undoubtedly emerge from further discussions, some of the clues may be found among the common characteristics described above.

One of the conclusions that may be drawn from the observation of these experiences, is that success is highly correlated with heavy emphasis on organisation, and that the survival of campesino organisation, in turn, has been directly linked with their control of productive resources. Community enterprises and other associated forms of production in existence in many countries of Latin America deserve further analysis from this perspective.

By the very nature of these experiences, their impact on equity seems to be mostly limited by the numbers of people involved in them. Within the political context in which they exist, and the radically different nature of social relations of production within these enterprises, however, it is not clear that they have a great impact on equality at this stage of their development.

10. Some Final Comments

10.1 In its many forms (literacy, job training, continuing education, education for liberation, and others) adult education may play an important role in reducing inequity. The Latin American experience shows that well designed educational programmes may be an important factor in the reduction of poverty, the attainment of higher incomes through better jobs and geographical mobility, and the development of new forms of social organisation of production.

10.2 While this potential role of adult education is recognised, its actual impact in reducing inequity - and inequality - has been systematically hampered by the lack of sustained political support for broader programmes aimed at the adoption of deep structural changes in society.

10.3 A relatively recent concern of many Latin American countries with the reduction of rural poverty, has opened many opportunities for the development of new adult education programmes directed to poor groups of rural inhabitants. In most cases, these have taken the form of literacy and job training, though some work on "campesino" organisation has also been possible, mostly associated with the establishment of new economic organisations.

10.4 While the potential of literacy and job training for the reduction of poverty is clear, there exists an important vacuum in the systematisation of operational and organisational principles needed to ensure the effectiveness of these programmes. It is also clear, however, that literacy and job training tend to have more impact when they are a part of broader packages of services dealing with relevant economic and social issues.

10.5 In all cases, the selection of appropriate programmes aimed at reducing poverty and fostering equity is more a strategic than a technical one. Unless political support is secured as priority, the decision on which programme to promote, will be an exercise in defining that which is permissible within a given political context.

10.6 All cases in which " campesino" organisation work may be started within an educational programme, particularly if it is based on the establishment of independent associative enterprises, will have greater chances of succeeding - according to the Latin American experience - than isolated rural literacy or job training programmes.